Even though there is an increasing trend in the ambient levels of pollutants, the average ambient levels of pollutants are found below their prescribed limits except in case of suspended particulates.

(d) The major pollutants in these areas are sulphur dioxide (SO_2), oxides of nitrogen (NO_x), carbon monoxide (CO) and suspended particulate matter (SPM).

(e) Measures taken to control air pollution in Delhi could not show appreciable results due to increase in population, industrial activities and vehicular emissions.

(f) The Government has taken a number of steps to check air pollution in Delhi which includes the following:

Improvement of Public Transport System and introduction of High Capacity Buses.

Introduction of low sulphur diesel and unleaded petrol.

Implementation of standards for new vehicles at manufacturing stage by March 2000.

Augmentation of Electrostatic Precipitators (ESPs) in the thermal power plants located in Delhi.

Enforcement of standards for control of vehicular emissions through State Transport Authority of National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi.

Enforcement of gaseous industrial emissions under the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981, as amended in 1987.

Owners of vehicles are required to obtain "Pollution Under Control (PUC)" certificate every three months from the State Transport Authorities for which Government of NCT of Delhi has authorised 140 private petrol pumps to provide facilities for pollution checking, tuning of polluting vehicles and issue of pollution control check certificates for petrol driven vehicles.

Regular checking is being carried out by the Transport Department against the polluting vehicles through its mobile enforcement squads. So far, 59,775 vehicles have been prosecuted between April 1990 and October 1996 under section 190 of Motor Vehicles Act. In addition, pollution control check certificates of 1,49,497 vehicles have been cancelled during this period.

Started a programme of running battery powered buses to minimise vehicular pollution.

An intensive public awareness campaign is being carried out by the Government of NCT of Delhi.

Inclusion of Betwa River under NRAP

2141. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Betwa river in Madhya Pradesh is covered under the National River Action Plan (NRAP);

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that the water the flows through this river is most polluted now, although a decade ago its water was clean;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the wastes from the distilleries, industrial effluents and domestic waste from Bhopal and the effluents from Mandideep industrial area are dumped into this river untreated;

(d) if so, the action Government plan to take to clean up this river; and

(e) if this river is not covered under NRAP, will Government consider bringing it under the plan?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) to (d) The water quality of river Betwa has deteriorated over the years due to rapid urbanisation and industrial activities in its basin. The river water is polluted due to the dis-

charge of domestic waste of Bhopal through the various drains joining the river. However, untreated effluents from the Mandideep industrial area are not discharged into the river. Accordingly, pollution abatement of river Betwa has been taken up under the National River Conservation Plan.

(e) Does not arise.

Environmental Activities in CRZ of Orissa

2142. SHRI SANATAN BISI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are examining the environmental activities according to the Supreme Court's judgement dated December 11, 1996 operating in the coastal regulation zone in Orissa; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) and (b) In compliance with the directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court on December 11, 1996, Government have constituted an Aquaculture Authority under Section 3(3) of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. This Authority will deal with all issues relating to shrimp culture industry in all coastal areas of the country including Orissa.

Andhra Pradesh Government's Request for Permission to allot Forest Land to the Occupant

2143. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Andhra Pradesh Government has asked for permission to allot lands to tribals and non-tribals who occupied forest land in the State and the State Government are ready to spare waste land in lieu of the forest land for afforestation purpose;

(b) if so, the action taken on the request; and

(c) by when the permission is likely to be granted?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) and (b) Government of Andhra Pradesh have submitted a proposal under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for dereservation of 33 ha. of forest land for assignment of pattas to tribals in Polavaram range in West Godawari district. The proposal has been received in the Ministry on 19.2.97 and is being processed.

(c) Expeditious action will be taken to take a decision on the proposal if it is found complete in all respects and within the policy framework.

Newsitem Captioned "Import of Hazardous Waste Management"

2144. SHRI O.P. KOHLI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item published in the 'Statesman', dated 16th February, 1997, under the caption "Import of hazardous waste continues";

(b) whether hazardous waste is still flooding India despite the import ban by the Delhi High Court, in blatant violation not only of Indian law but also of the Basel Convention on trans-boundary movement thereof; and

(c) the reason for Government being unable to stop the import of such waste which is a serious environmental and health hazard?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The import of hazardous wastes is regulated under rule-11 of the Hazardous Wastes (Management and Handling) Rules, 1989, notified by the Government of India, Ministry of Envi-